

**Walk with an Expert**– Try anytime in the coming year!

Rev. Dr. Judi McMillan, pcbv.org

**Step One:** Ask yourself what part of your community you're curious about. Is it a new school or business down the street? From home or church? Is there someone you don't know well that you'd enjoy spending some time with? Ask for an hour of their time. Meet somewhere public and go for a walk or have coffee/tea. The intention here is to get to know someone new, listen well and learn about a subject matter (their expertise). It could be a member you don't know well at church. It could be a business owner, a neighbor or anyone you are curious about. The intention is to practice listening and hospitality as Christians.

**Step Two - Questions:**

- a. Write up a list of curiosity questions. You're asking them to share something **they are an expert in**. Come up with a list of questions, be open that you are a member of a church and you want to find ways to connect with the community.
  
- b. Perhaps you want to know more about a community group or the neighborhood schools. This is your time to get to know a stranger. The idea is to be curious about what is happening today in and around the church and city. Maybe you've always wanted to meet a local Firefighter or City Planner; a Librarian or a Store Owner. Find out what changes they have seen recently in their day to day lives. What brings them joy? Helps them feel connected? Drives them to pursue their interests? What about faith? Do they have a practice? What drew them to live in Arkansas? Did they grow up here? What do they hope for? Do they see a connection with their expertise and the role of faith in the life of this community? What are the needs they see facing their own neighbors?

**Step Three:** Write up the story of your conversation for your team/committee or session. It might be a way to spark new ideas for ministry based upon what you all learn when taking one walk at a time. Being curious about our neighbors is scriptural. Jesus sent disciples out two by two with very little but asked them to

expect hospitality from some. You never know what can happen when following God!

c. Outline to use for presenting findings to your team:

- i. Here is what I learned with my “Walk with an Expert”
- ii. I met \_\_\_\_\_ to find out more about \_\_\_\_\_ in our (city) \_\_\_\_\_. I learned their hopes and what has changed.
- iii. Share what was exciting about this new encounter, or what moved my thinking about being a good neighbor.
- iv. This neighbor has expertise in an area that might help our congregation understand (connection, creativity, hospitality...etc.) and I learned they seek new knowledge/experience from (classes, on-line learning, seminars, schools, professional orgs. etc.)
- v. The person I interviewed was/was not currently involved in a faith group. Share more here if applicable.
- vi. After asking these faith questions I learned ... (If you were to “church shop” or “faith shop” what would excite you about a community of faith? What are you looking for? How do you go looking for a faith community to belong to? What do you believe is the role of church in today’s world?)
- vii. Their understanding of what the current needs are around us  
...
- viii. We ended the conversation with ...